

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8939

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 4668

EXDIS

E.O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UR, US

SUBJECT: CONVERSATION WITH KOSYGIN

1. I HAD BRIEF BUT VERY WARM CONVERSATION WITH KOSYGIN LAST NIGHT APRIL 4 AT HUNGARIAN EMBASSY RECEPTION COMMEMORATING 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF LIBERATION OF HUNGARY. KOSYGIN, WHO WAS ENGAGED IN ANIMATED CONVERSATION WITH MARSHALL YAKUBOVSKY, CENTRAL COMMITTEE SECRETARY KATUSHEV AND CLUTCH OF OTHER HIGH-RANKING OFFICIALS, BROKE OFF TO GREET ME WITH ALMOST OSTENTATIOUS CORDIALITY. HE SPOKE FIRST OF FACT THAT US AND SOVIETS HAD BEEN ALLIES IN WORLD WAR II AND HAD FOUGHT TOGETHER FOR GREAT IDEALS. HE THOUGHT THIS WAS SPIRIT WHICH SHOULD ANIMATE OUR RELATIONS TODAY. HE HAD HEARD THAT HARRIMAN WOULD BE COMING TO MOSCOW IN CONNECTION WITH VE DAY CELEBRATIONS, AND SAID HARRIMAN WOULD BE WECOMED AS OLD FRIEND FROM WAR DAYS.

2. KOSYGIN CONTINUED THAT IT WAS ESSENTIAL FOR US AND USSR TO CONTINUE ALONG PATH OF DETENTE; WE SHOULD NOT BE DETERRED BY "VOICES IN PRESS" WHICH CRITICIZE THIS POLICY OR BY THOSE WHO WISH TO DRIVE WEDGE BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES. KOSYGIN SAID IT WAS FIRM SOVIET POLICY TO WORK WITH US AND THAT THERE WAS NO OTHER RATIONAL ALTERNATIVE.

3. KOSYGIN NOTED THAT SECRETARY SIMON WOULD BE COMING TO MOSCOW NEXT WEEK. HE SAID HE WOULD RECEIVE SIMON AND LOOKED FORWARD TO A USEFUL DISCUSSION WITH HIM ON ECONOMIC QUESTIONS.

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4. KOSYGIN CLOSED BY ASKING THAT I TRANSMIT HIS WARMEST WISHES,

AND THOSE OF GENERAL SECRETARY BREZHNEV, TO THE PRESIDENT AND SECRETARY KISSINGER.

5. AFTER TALKING TO KOSYGIN, I EXCHANGED A FEW WORDS WITH KATUSHEV, WHO IS RARELY SEEN BY WESTERNERS, AND WITH DEMICHEV, MINISTER OF CULTURE AND FORMER MEMBER OF CC SECRETARIAT. DEMICHEV SPOKE IN MOST APPROVING TERMS OF AGREEMENT SIGNED YESTERDAY MORNING BETWEEN MINISTRY OF CULTURE AND ARMAND HAMMER FOR EXCHANGE OF ART MASTERPIECES BETWEEN US AND USSR. KATUSHEV, WHO SEEMED RELAXED AND FRIENDLY IN MANNER, SUPPORTED THIS AND SAID WITH APPARENT SINCERITY THAT SUCH CULTURAL EXCHANGES WERE IMPORTANT PART OF US-SOVIET RELATIONSHIP, HELPED OUR PEOPLES KNOW ONE ANOTHER BETTER, AND SHOULD BE EXPANDED.

6. IN GENERAL, I WAS STRUCK BY CORDIALITY OF THESE EXCHANGES, WHICH WERE HELD WITHIN EARSHOT AND IN FULL VIEW OF LARGE GROUP OF HIGH-RANKING PARTY AND WARSAW PACT PERSONALITIES. STOESSEL

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